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INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 001283

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STATE FOR NEA/MAG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/03/2016

TAGS: NATO PREL MARR MO

SUBJECT: MOROCCO: ENGAGING MED DIALOGUE COUNTRIES ON NATO'S MIDDLE EAST SECURITY COOPERATION CENTER

REF: STATE 109350

Classified By: Poloff Marcel Martinez for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Poloff met July 3 with MFA Bilateral Affairs officer Karim Halim to deliver reftel talking points on engaging Mediterranean Dialogue countries on NATO's Middle East Security Cooperation Center. Poloff stressed the July 5 NAC plus 7 meeting as an opportunity for Morocco to provide its views on NATO's training initiative, and in particular for Morocco to share its thoughts on a security cooperation center.

¶2. (C) While thanking Poloff for raising the issue, Halim reiterated Morocco's interest and support for all initiatives that work to increase and ensure stability in the region. Halim, however, noted that Morocco would like to review a "more clear and concrete" proposal on the security cooperation center before providing a substantive response. Halim had specific concerns regarding funding, including who would pay for the center and through what mechanism. He added that he hoped the July 5 meeting would address many of the issues he, and his colleagues in Brussels, find "unclear."

¶3. (C) On Jordan, Halim sought further explanation on why the US is supporting Jordan as a possible host for the center. While not explicitly proposing Morocco as a possible host, Halim said Morocco is also "well placed" and is also home to an international training center. In closing, Halim said that many embassies, including the Polish, have recently approached the MFA seeking Morocco's position on this topic.

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